This rehabilitation program is designed to return the individual to their full activities as quickly and safely as possible following a Deltoid ligament repair. Modifications to this guideline may be necessary dependent on physician specific instruction or other procedures performed. This evidence-based guideline is criterion-based; time frames and visits in each phase will vary depending on many factors. The therapist may modify the program appropriately depending on the individual’s goals for activity following a Deltoid ligament repair.

This guideline is intended to provide the treating clinician a frame of reference for rehabilitation. It is not intended to substitute clinical judgment regarding the patient’s post-operative care based on exam/treatment findings, individual progress, and/or the presence of concomitant procedures or post-operative complications. If the clinician should have questions regarding post-operative progression, they should contact the referring physician.

* **Weightbearing Progression:** 
  + Weeks 0 - 2: Non-weight bearing
  + Weeks 2 – 4: Partial weight bearing progressing to WBAT with walking boot
  + Weeks 4 - 8: Full weight bearing with walking boot
  + Weeks 8+: Full weight bearing

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Phase** | **Suggested Interventions** | **Goals/Milestones for Progression** |
| **Phase I**  Weeks 0 – 2 | Immobilization: Cast or walking boot  WB Status: NWB  Precautions: Avoid passive or active ankle ROM  Therapy:   * Cryotherapy, compression, elevation * Hip, knee and core strengthening * Toe curls, toe extension, toe spreads * Transfer and gait training with optimal AD | Goals of Phase:   1. Edema control/reduction 2. Protection of surgical site 3. Independence with safe mobility   Criteria to Advance to Next Phase:   1. Reduction in pain and edema |
| **Phase II**  Weeks 2-8 | Immobilization: Cast or walking boot  WB Status: Partial weight bearing progressing to WBAT with walking boot and appropriate AD as needed  Precautions: Avoid stretching into ankle eversion or external rotation  Therapy:   * Initiate PROM, AAROM and AROM for all planes of ankle mobility * Ankle sub-max isometric strengthening in neutral * Proprioception activities involving double leg stance * Gait training * Nustep, Anti-gravity treadmill * Continue with hip, knee and core strengthening * Light soft tissue mobilization as indicated * Joint mobilizations as indicated, avoiding tensioning of deltoid ligament | Goals of Phase:   1. Protection of the repair 2. Normalized gait pattern with walking boot 3. Prevention of scar adhesions   Criteria to Advance to Next Phase:   1. Pain-free ambulation 2. Pain-free AROM of ankle in all planes |
| **Phase III**  Weeks 8-12 | WB Status: Full weight bearing with ankle stabilizing brace as needed  Therapy:   * Ankle AROM in all planes with alphabet, circles, BAPS board * Standing BAPS board * Progression of ankle strengthening from short arc isotonics to full arc isotonics to eccentrics * Gastrocnemius/soleus stretching * Proprioception activities involving unilateral stance * Gait drills: forward march, backward march, side stepping, backward stepping * Bike, elliptical * Soft tissue mobilization and joint mobilizations as indicated | Goals of Phase:   1. Full ankle ROM 2. 5/5 strength in all ankle muscle groups 3. Normalized, pain-free gait on even/uneven surfaces and stairs (with or without ankle brace as needed)   Criteria to Advance to Next Phase:   1. Full ankle strength on manual muscle testing 2. Single leg balance equal to contralateral side |
| **Phase IV**  Weeks 12 + | Precautions: Continue use of ankle brace during sports or high level activity for 6 months for increased stability and proprioception  Therapy:   * Toe running/hopping * Initiate jogging with progression to running * Jump rope * Initiate proprioception and plyometric activities   + Horizontal leg press jumps   + Bilateral jumps: Vertical jumps in place, up to and down from 4” and 6” blocks   + Depth jumps up and down from 8” and 12” block   + Lateral jumping over line, up and over 4” block   + Jumps in series with multiple planes   + Start with straight line running, progress to large figure 8’s, cutting and zig-zags   + Retro jog, side shuffle, carioca, bounding, jog-sprint-jog, figure eights, 45 degree cuts, 90 degree cuts, single leg hop for distance, single leg hop for time * Sport-specific movements | Goals of Phase:   1. No apprehension with sport-specific drills and activities 2. Stability with high velocity movements 3. No pain with plyometric activities   Return to Sport:   1. May return to sport after receiving clearance by orthopedic surgeon along with physical therapist/athletic trainer |